

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-9, 11, 14-20 are now pending in the application. Claims 4, 6, 10, 12 and 13 have been cancelled by this amendment. Since all amended claims contain the same or similar structural components as the originally filed claims, the Applicants contend that the specification and drawings, as originally filed, support all amended and currently pending claims. Furthermore, the scope of the amended claims is such that the Applicants believe that a new or different prior art search will not be necessary. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 6, 13 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enable requirement. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Figures 2-5 show the intermediate portion 100 with its planar portion or flange 130 over, and acting as the roof of, the storage compartment 74. This flange 130 prevents the blower fan 108 (Fig. 3) from sucking light-weight items out of the storage compartment 74, since the blower fan 108 has no intake ductwork and simply draws air from behind and within the dash (Fig. 3). Without the intermediate portion 100 and flange 130, there would be nothing to prevent intake air from the blower fan 108 from drawing light-weight items out of the storage compartment. Also, see paragraphs [0030] and [0033]. Although Claims 6 and 13 have been cancelled, the subject matter of those claims is pending in other claims.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by either Ito et al. or Shibata et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 1, 8 and 15 claim or have been amended to claim an intermediate duct portion that is a top cover to a storage compartment such as a glove box. None of the references disclose such a structure.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Yamada or Kondo et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed. The Applicants have specifically stated the problem that is solved by the duct path on pages 8 and 9, the pertinent part of which is, "the passenger foot duct 70 is then routed to an area above the storage compartment 74 and a storage compartment door 94. As will be described further, an intermediate portion 100 of the passenger foot duct 70 is arranged to cover a portion of an upper opening 102 in the storage compartment 74 to impede air flowing from the storage compartment 74 into a blower fan 108 disposed above the storage compartment 74. As a result, contents in the storage compartment 74 are less likely to be ingested into the blower fan 108." Therefore, from the foregoing quotation, the problem of items being drawn from the glove compartment by the blower fan 108 (Fig. 3) is solved. Without the positioning of the intermediate portion 100 with its connective flange 130 (also called a planar portion) over the storage compartment 74, items such as tissue paper could be ingested from

the storage compartment 74 into the blower fan 108. This is supported by the quotation above, Fig. 3, and paragraphs [0030] and [0033].


However, notwithstanding the above, Claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended to claim, or already claim, structure not disclosed in the cited art. In light of such, the Applicants believe all claims to be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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